

Examiners' Report
June 2016

GCE Music 6MU06 01

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Introduction

The first section of this paper tests musical skills of aural perception based on unfamiliar pieces of music. In the second section, candidates are required to show knowledge of set works from the New Anthology of Music through stylistic analysis and require the ability to compare and contrast two musical elements across three of the set pieces.

In terms of assessment, the two listening questions (Questions (Q)1 and Q2) have 10 and 18 marks respectively. For Q3 - Music in Context, candidates are required to answer two out of three questions worth 13 marks each. The exam concludes with Q4 - Continuity and Change in Instrumental Music, where candidates answer one of two questions based on two musical elements across three set pieces and this essay is worth 36 marks. An unmarked copy of The New Anthology of Music is provided for candidates to make reference to in their written responses.

Responses to Q1 (Comparison) seemed comparable or slightly improved upon previous years with many good answers on instrument recognition, textural features of Excerpt B and metre and rhythmic descriptions of the two excerpts.

Q2 (Aural Awareness) is a challenging section of the paper and candidates need to keep persevering with practice of aural dictation, identification of chords, keys and cadences in preparation for the exam. Encouragingly, the latter areas of keys and cadences showed good improvement this year.

In the case of Q3, the most popular option proved to be question (c) *On the Waterfront* by Bernstein followed by (b) Schoenberg's *Der kranke Mond* from *Pierrot Lunaire* and then a significantly smaller minority opting for (a) the Bach Cantata No.48. There were many good responses across the three essays, although it must be stressed that candidates need to read the question carefully in order for their response to be focussed and relevant.

For Q4, an equal distribution of candidates chose between (a) comparing and contrasting texture and use of instruments in pieces by JS Bach, Brahms, Duke Ellington and (b) comparing and contrasting melody and rhythm (including metre) in pieces by Holborne, Haydn and Shostakovich. The best pieces of work showed considerable knowledge across all three pieces, strong analytical skills with secure use of technical vocabulary and fluent writing skills within a well-structured essay. Candidates should take care not to deviate from the two musical elements being asked or to write lengthy introductions with background information about the composer and piece. Whilst insight into the historical and contextual background is an important part of the learning process, marks for this essay are only awarded for analytical features.

Candidates should be reminded not to write in pages of the paper not specifically allocated for a particular response, for example using the blank pages for Q3 (c) to continue an answer for Q3 (b). The lined paper provided underneath the essay title for Q3 and Q4 should be used wisely for the essay, rather than for overly spacious planning, which, whilst being a sensible process, could equally occur on other areas of blank paper in the answer booklet such as the space provided below the questions for Q4 (a) and (b) on page 12.

Question 1 (a)

This question involved identifying the instrument which accompanied the singer in Excerpt A. A large number of candidates were able to name this correctly as the accordion.

Question 1 (b)

With many different instruments and a wide variety of textures featuring in Excerpt B, there was a good number of opportunities for credit and candidates often scored very well on this question.

(b) Describe the instrumental forces and/or textural features used in Excerpt B.

(4)

The ^{main} melody is in the male vocal part, but the same is played by the flute.
The texture is overall melody dominated homophony, there are parts in unison. It begins monophonic after which a pedal note ^(chord) is added before ^a the melody joins, ~~and~~ followed by the same melody in the vocal part.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate made four valid points in order to achieve full marks. They showed a good balance between instrument identification and use of textural vocabulary.

Flute (1)

Melody dominated homophony (1)

Begins monophonic (1)

Pedal note (1)



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Examiner Tip

If a particular texture only occurs in one place in the excerpt it is important to state the location ie monophonic at start, as monophonic alone would not gain a mark.

Question 1 (c)

In this question candidates were required to give three differences of metre and rhythm. Many identified the metre of each excerpt successfully but found it more challenging to describe the rhythm.

1(d) A significant number of candidates recognised the distinctive modal sonority of this folk music and were led towards Option A, Dorian, although Pentatonic was an incorrect, but popular, alternative.

1(e) Nearly all candidates identified the country of origin as being Option B, Scotland, seeing the similarities with the Irish jig and reel which had been studied as one of their Applied Music set works.

This candidate made a good comparison of the different time signatures and then one clear rhythmic observation.

- AB (c) Give **three** differences of rhythm and metre between Excerpts A and B. A = duple time
B = triple time
(3)
1. A is in duple time, B is in triple time
 2. Straight rhythms mainly in A vocal melody, dotted rhythms used more in B
 3. ~~Motif of quarter, quarter, semiquaver~~ Syncopated harmonic support in B. Straight, Sustained chords accompany A.



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Examiner Comments

A = duple time 1
B = triple time 1
Dotted rhythms used in B 1
3 marks

Question 2 (a)

Candidates found this aural dictation question challenging. Generally, rhythm was attempted with more successful results than pitch.

Challenges of pitch included the leap of a perfect 4th from bar 27-28 which, if misidentified, led to the candidate beginning on the wrong note for the chromatic descent - which they also found difficult. Candidates frequently went up a 3rd rather than a 4th and did not move in semitones.

Challenges of rhythm included the syncopation in bar 27 and the dotted rhythms in bar 28.

Here is a good attempt at this aural dictation exercise. The candidate identifies the leap of a 4th successfully and starts well on the semitone descent; problems with pitch were solved at the end.

The majority of the rhythms were correct, except for the syncopation in the middle.

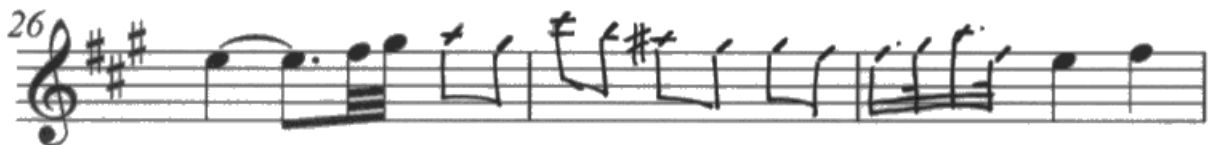
2 AURAL AWARENESS

You will hear an excerpt of music **five** times. The playings will be separated by pauses and the length of each pause will be announced.

In order to answer the questions you should also refer to the separate skeleton score.

- (a) Write out the melody line of bars 26 (beat 3) – 28 (beat 1). You may work in rough on the skeleton score, but you **must** copy your answer onto the stave below.

(8)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

10 correct rhythms
7 correct pitches
17 marks (at the top of the sixth mark band)



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always work out aural dictation exercises in relation to the given music at the beginning and end.

Question 2 (b) (i)

Many candidates identified the harmonic device correctly as a pedal note, but in an aural test at A2 level they are required to describe the degree of the scale. 'Tonic pedal' was, therefore, the correct answer.

Question 2 (b) (ii)

Most candidates recognised the dissonance successfully, as being a suspension.

Question 2 (b) (iii)

The cadence question was answered significantly better than in previous years, and it was rare for candidates to give an incorrect answer.

Question 2 (b) (iv)

Most candidates identified the key correctly as the tonic key of A major. This was possibly assisted by both their ear and the skeleton score, which showed a scalar melody revolving around the notes of A major.

Question 2 (b) (v)

A pleasing number of candidates identified the second key as the relative minor key of F# minor. Candidates could rely on their ear and the raised 7th note (E#) shown in the skeleton score. A wide variety of minor keys was given as an incorrect substitute.

Question 2 (b) (vi)

There were more mixed results with the third key of E major, which did not contain any clues of accidentals in the skeleton score, and followed on immediately after the aural dictation question at the end of the excerpt.

Question 2 (c)

An encouraging number of candidates achieved the correct answer of a diminished 7th, an area which candidates continually find very challenging. A wide variety of incorrect answers was given, such as an augmented 6th, chord V or dominant 7th.

2(d) Mozart was selected frequently as the correct composer of the music. Brahms was quite a popular incorrect choice, despite candidates having studied the Brahms Piano Quintet as one of their Instrumental Music set works, and some candidates opted for Schumann.

2(e) A significant number of candidates chose Option B, 1789, as the correct date of composition. Where candidates had selected a Romantic composer in the previous question, later dates were often chosen for this question.

2(f) The majority of candidates chose Option B, string quartet, as the correct answer. Occasionally, string trio was chosen as an incorrect alternative. Violin concerto was more rare.

Question 3 (a)

This question on Bach proved to be the least popular choice with candidates, and whilst examiners saw some good answers, other candidates found it difficult to achieve sufficient detail.

Some candidates did not read the question carefully and wrote about all four movements contained in the anthology, rather than just the first movement as specified by the question.

Many candidates showed that they had understood features of this work which added to the meaning of the text, such as suspensions, appoggiaturas, diminished 7th chords, sequences, imitation and many more. Tonality was an area in which candidates could have gone into greater detail; for example, noting that it only used minor keys and giving examples of specific keys with reference to bar numbers.

This was a good response achieving a mark in the Excellent category. It was well written, clearly organised and showed a thorough understanding of some of the most important features of the music including tonality.

- 3 (a) How does Bach's music convey the meaning of the text in movement I of Cantata No 48, *Ich elender Mensch*?

(13)

From the beginning of the piece, Bach uses frequent suspensions to create a sense of melancholy eg. violin 1 bar 1³ → 2² and a retardation bar 5³ → 6¹. He also uses diminished intervals in the violin melody of the ritornello to reflect despair - bar 5 A^b → B^b and bar 7 B^b → C[#]. The use of diminished 7th chords, as in bars 2¹ and 3³ also add to this effect.

The only lyrics used in this movement translate as 'Oh unhappy man that I am, who will ~~save~~^{deliver} me from this deplorable body?' and it is used in all voice parts throughout. The descending shape of this melody reflects the anguish of the 'man' - eg. bar 13-14. The frequent use of suspensions in this melody also creates a tension, eg. bar 15 soprano part.

Use of a four part counterpoint reflects the confliction and turmoil of the protagonist of the text, eg. bars 37 and then bars 101-105.

The predominance of minor keys used creates a somber nature for the piece, for example the Circle of fifths: bar 89-90 - soprano - D minor; bar 91-92 - alto - G minor; bar 93-94 - tenor - C minor and bar 95-96 - Bass - F minor.

The inclusion of a solo trumpet, by Bach, playing a cantus firmus, reflects the solitary desolation of the main character - eg. bar $14^3 \rightarrow 18^2$: one part which stands out from the rest of the instruments.

The use of Ritornello form for this first movement provides a reminder for the 'man' as well as the listener - bars 1-12 (later eg. bars 66-73) it is as if the despair is recurring and consistent.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Illustrated points:

Suspension/retardation (I), Diminished 7th chords (I), Descending shape of the melody (I), D minor (I), C minor (I), F minor (I), Cantus Firmus (I)

Basic points:

The only lyrics used in this movement = repetition of text (B), Predominance of minor keys (B), Ritornello form (B)

7 illustrated points

3 basic points

11 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Read the question carefully, especially where only one movement in a multi-movement piece is specified.

Question 3 (b)

This question was a popular choice and examiners saw many good responses showing a real understanding of Schoenberg's Expressionist style, and how the music established a disturbing atmosphere.

Many candidates were able to identify stylistic features such as atonality, use of *sprechgesang*, extreme dynamics, monophonic and free counterpoint textures and many more. The best responses saw detailed descriptions of angular melodic intervals and dissonant harmonic intervals, along with the wide vocal range, low flute register and thorough descriptions of articulation.

This was a good response showing thorough understanding of the stylistic features, although greater detail could have been shown to convert basic points into illustrated points and, therefore, extra marks. Perhaps too much background information was included at the expense of musical points.

~~Only clown on stage~~ ~~EXPRESSION - A.C~~ ~~THROUGH COMP-UNPREDIC~~ ~~NO SHARP~~
~~Time sig Jux notes~~ ~~NO SHARP - FREE C.P~~ ~~DYNAMICS EXTREME~~ ~~SPRECHGESANG~~
~~CHROMATICISM~~ **If you answer part (b) put a cross in the box .** ~~LEAP~~

(b) How does Schoenberg create a disturbing atmosphere in his setting of 'Der kranke Mond' from *Pierrot Lunaire*?

(13)

'Der Kranke Mond' was written by Schoenberg in 1912. It was taken from "Pierrot Lunaire": A setting of 21 poems put to music, and Schoenberg described it as a melodrama (speech heightened by music).

It would originally have been performed with the flute off stage and the reciter on stage, in full costume. The clown would have been expressing his despair and madness ("You die, of longing, deep and choking"), which may have disturbed the audience as clowns are images of horror.

The time signature is in $\frac{6}{4}$, yet the juxtaposition and wide variety of note lengths makes it difficult to perceive a regular pulse. This can be seen at B10 of the flute, where two quavers are followed by a minim and dotted minim.

There is use of chromaticism (for example, B2 of the reciter, G4 followed by F#) which creates a very dissonant - non-tuneful

- melody. The sheer amount of chromaticism would not have been conventional at the time, and may have disturbed listeners.*

This piece is an example of expressionism. This movement is the reflections of psychological states and inner-most feelings, in music. Though this music was not well received by the public, Avant Guard enthusiasts loved it.

The piece only requires two instrumentalists: the flute, and the reciter. These play in free counterpoint, not sharing any melodic material. This disturbed ~~listeners~~^{audiences} as they were unsure which part to listen to.

The piece is through-composed to represent the different stanzas of the poem. Each stanza ~~is~~ is separated by brief flute interludes (for example, B9-10) and each stanza is different, reflecting the reciter's volatile state of mind. This increases the unpredictable aspect of the piece.

The extreme dynamics create an unsettled atmosphere, as they make the piece (and the clown reciter) seem unstable.

For example, B13 ends with a crescendo to 'f' before dropping to 'pppp' at the start of B15.

The use of 'sprechelied' (Speechsong) ^{in the reciter} creates a very disturbing atmosphere. This is indicated by notes with crosses through them (B3, of reciter) and is when the notes are immediately quitted by a slide. ^{unpredictable,}

Finally, wide, ^ leaps make the piece very disturbing, as the listener is unsure where the melody will carry them. It takes it away from the conventional sense of

tuneful. This can be seen in the opening 3 bars, where the flute leaps from G, to E^b, and then over an octave down to D⁴.

* All notes of the chromatic scale are used within the first 3 bars.



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Examiner Comments

Illustrated points:

Extreme dynamics (I), *Sprechgesang* (I), Wide leaps (I),
All notes of the chromatic scale (I)

Basic points:

Lack of regular pulse (B), Dissonant (B), Chromaticism
(B), Expressionism (B), Free counterpoint (B), Through-
composed (B),

4 illustrated points

6 basic points

10 marks



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Examiner Tip

Keep background information brief and focus
immediately on the musical features.

Question 3 (c)

This was the most popular question choice for the Part B *Music in Context* section of the exam and it was clear that candidates had enjoyed studying this film score.

Good knowledge was often shown as to how Bernstein conveyed isolation through the use of a horn monophonic solo, with a minor pentatonic melody based on minor 3rds and making use of blue notes. Candidates were able, then, to describe the conflict through the fugal percussion *ostinato*, extreme dynamics, bitonality, tritones, accented homorhythmic sections and many more features.

There were numerous instrumental effects that could receive credit, but it should be remembered that a full description or translation, and not an abbreviation, is required, along with the bar number. Many candidates observed the alternating time signatures at the *Presto Barbaro* section and they must give a full numeric description of duple and triple to gain credit.

This is a thorough and well-written response, which belongs in the 'outstanding' mark category. The candidate is concise and presents their information clearly in bullet points.

(c) How does Bernstein convey isolation and conflict in *On the Waterfront: Symphonic Suite (opening)*?

(13)

Bernstein conveys isolation and conflict in *On the Waterfront* in the following ways:

- In bars 1-6 the texture is monophonic with a horn solo. This suggests loneliness.
- There is no key signature, and ~~the~~ the notes in bars 1-6 are based on blues notes and the pentatonic scale. This gives a modal feel and conveys isolation and conflict.
- ~~The~~ In bar 1 the first two notes have a minor third. There is a tritone in bar 5. There are also tritones in bars 106-109, where there are F major and B major triads a tritone apart. This helps convey isolation and conflict.
- The harmony is non-functional and there are no cadences. The piece ends suddenly and without a cadence, which creates suspense.

- Bernstein uses unusual combinations of instruments, for example in bars 7-12 the flutes and trombone 1 play in canon. This conveys conflict.
- There is dissonance, for example in bar 16 there is an F_b and an F_n. This portrays conflict.
- presto Barbaro means fast and barbaric, which portrays violence and conflict.
The percussion section play an ~~repeat~~ ostinato riff passage from bars 20-10's, which creates a dramatic affect and conveys conflict.
- The alto saxophone solo (from bar 42) is marked 'fff' and 'crudely', which portrays conflict.
- The time signature in the Presto Barbaro section ~~is~~ alternates between simple duple time and simple triple time. This conveys conflict. There are cross-rhythms in bars 50-52 which help portray conflict.
- There are extreme dynamics, for example bar 52 is marked 'ff', then 'pp', then bar 53 has 'sppz'. This creates a dramatic feel and conveys conflict.
- The instruments often play in a high tessitura, for example in bars 58-62, which creates a dramatic feel.
- Bars 78-87 are homorhythmic, which portrays conflict.
- The strings play 'sul pont.' in bars 108-~~110~~ 110, which creates suspense.



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Examiner Comments

Illustrated points:

Monophonic (I), Minor 3rd (I), Tritone (I), Canon (I), Ostinato (I),
Saxophone solo (I), Alternating time signatures (I), Cross-rhythms (I),
Extreme dynamics (I), Homorhythmic (I)

Basic points:

Horn solo (B), Blue notes (B), Pentatonic scale (B), Non-functional
harmony (B), F major/B major chords (B: note bar numbers are not
sufficiently precise for an illustrated point), Fast (B)

Note: there is no credit for the abbreviation *sul pont*. Either it must be
sul ponticello or 'on the bridge' to be credited as an illustrated point.

10 illustrated points

9 basic points

13 marks



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Examiner Tip

Bullet points help to keep responses precise.

Use the anthology to support answers and turn basic
points into illustrated points.

Question 4 (a)

Q4a and Q4b General Information

It was encouraging to see many examples of well-written essays showing considerable knowledge of the set pieces and the best examples supported their musical points with well-chosen illustrations. There were still many candidates who gave a series of basic points, without significant, substantiating illustration. It is possible to earn a reasonably good mark using this approach, although it should be remembered that the highest mark bands will not be accessible. It is for this reason that candidates are provided with a blank copy of the anthology in the exam and they should ensure that they provide evidence for each musical point made, with an accurate example using precise bar numbers.

Candidates should be reminded that whilst it is important to produce a well-structured and coherently organised essay, a lengthy introduction and conclusion is not necessary and will not achieve additional marks. In this section of the exam, credit is only available for analytical features and not for historical or contextual information. Examiners frequently commented upon it being common for the entire first page to be spent on a lengthy introduction about the background of the composer and the piece, for which candidates gained no marks at all.

Candidates should ensure that they choose a question where they have a good knowledge of all three set works. It was common to see notable imbalance of knowledge across the three set works or, in the most extreme cases, the omission of one musical element or entire set work.

In this question, candidates were required to compare and contrast texture and use of instruments in set works by Bach, Brahms and Ellington. It was pleasing to see many extremely well written, coherently structured and thorough accounts of these set works.

In general, candidates showed the most thorough knowledge of the Brahms Piano Quintet and had understood the wide variety of different textures, instrumental writing and techniques demonstrated in this work. The majority of candidates were able to identify the Fugato section but not all were able to describe the different sections that this comprised. Again, the Bach saw many very good descriptions of the different textures between the Sarabande and Gigue, and the best answers were able to show an understanding of the fugal structure. Some good knowledge was shown on the Ellington but some responses required greater detail in terms of the variety of textures and the precise instrumental techniques.

Question 4 (b)

In this question, candidates were required to compare and contrast melody, rhythm and metre in the set works by Holborne, Haydn and Shostakovich.

There were some good responses to this question, showing thorough knowledge of melodic and rhythmic features through these highly contrasting works. Candidates were often able to write about the conjunct melody of the Holborne with the slow Pavane based on the descending 4th motif and the lively Galliard featuring dotted rhythms in inversion with syncopation. Knowledge of the Haydn was shown through descriptions of the 1st and 2nd subjects, their phrasing and features such as sequence, ornamentation and the highly distinctive syncopation. Candidates probably found the Shostakovich most challenging to write about and needed to break down their description of the motifs more precisely. There was good knowledge shown of the diatonic Prelude with some areas of chromaticism and its change of metre towards the end and the triadic Fugue with its dotted rhythms and use of syncopation.

However, some candidates frequently found themselves venturing away from the set musical elements and writing extensively about the imitative texture of the Holborne, or the Sonata form and tonality of the Haydn, or the pianistic texture of the Shostakovich, for example. It is essential to keep strictly to the two musical elements required by the question.

Candidates quite often found it challenging writing specifically about the use of rhythm, with metre being a problematic area. It is important when writing about metre that candidates give a full musical description. For example, writing that the Shostakovich was in 12/8 time would gain no marks, whereas writing that it is in quadruple time would gain a mark.

When writing about melody candidates should consider devices such as a sequences, repetition, ornamentation, length of phrases, descriptions of motifs etc.

When writing about rhythm, as mentioned above, candidates should give numeric descriptions of time signatures and maintain this when describing changes of metre. They should also refer to syncopation, other rhythmic devices and predominant types of rhythms used in the piece.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- In Q1 comparison, be sure to indicate the excerpt of music about which you are writing
- Q1 and Q2 draw on music which has some connection with the works you have studied for the *Music in Context* and *Continuity and Change* Areas of Study, ie genre, structure and/or historical period
- In the aural dictation exercise, take care to work out intervals correctly, listening carefully for close semitone movement and the occurrence of leaps
- In Q3, you may answer in bullet points, and should avoid an extensive introduction
- In Q4, it may be helpful to set out your lines of enquiry briefly, but again, extensive introductions will probably not gain many marks. Choose accurate and well-selected examples from the anthology to support your technical points
- When writing about metre in Q4, always give a full description referring to the number of beats in the bar. 4/4 should be written as 'quadruple time'
- Practise essay writing skills under timed conditions
- Keep to the point and avoid repetition
- Keep listening to the set works, but also make sure you explore the works of other pieces by the same composer and works of composers in the same genre

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